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STATE FOR ECA/PE/V/R/W COLLEEN FOWLER AND KAY YATES
ECA/PE/V/M MARGERY BENSON AND SEQUITA ROBINSON
WHA/PDA CHAD WEST
WHA/CAR JACKIE ROSHOLT

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: EVALUATION OF PARTICIPATION OF JANE SMITH IN FY 2008
MULTI-REGIONAL PROGRAM: "U.S. LIBRARIES"

¶1. (U) Overview and positives: Jane Smith, Director of Libraries at Anton de Kom University, participated as an International Visitor in the FY 2008 Multi-Regional Program "U.S. Libraries" from June 19 to July 10, 2008. As the library system in Suriname is based on the European (Dutch) model, Smith praised the trip as a very good opportunity to make a comparison with the American system. She stated that her main take-away from her participation in the IV program was that "there is still much to learn and share." Ms. Smith said she was most impressed by the size of American libraries and their customer service, public focus, and number of people served, in particular at the Presidential Library. She called elements of her tour "inspiring... extraordinary and impressive."

¶2. (U) Negatives: While overwhelmingly positive in her review, Smith also pointed out that the three English Language Officers (ELOs) did not have clearly-defined responsibilities among themselves, and that this led to competition between them that damaged the group dynamic and left the participants unsure of to which of the three ELOs they were supposed to turn to for help. Smith also said the schedule was too packed, leaving too little time for individual initiatives.

¶3. (U) Impact: Smith indicated she plans to institute at her own library the practices she observed during her visit to U.S. libraries. She noted her expectation that these planned improvements should contribute more to the University's planned accreditation process. Smith wrote the Ambassador to say, "the professional appointments... gave me a lot of ideas... I assure you that my experience will have a positive outcome for librarianship in Suriname in general." Furthermore, Smith is a lecturer at the University, and is sure to share her experiences with her students. Her IVLP experience reinforced the Embassy's relationship with the University. Post's ability to offer concrete assistance is limited, and exchange programs such as this one are an invaluable tool in helping bridge the gap.

SCHREIBER HUGHES